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EXAMINER

RODRIGUEZ, RUTH C

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**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.



## DETAILED ACTION

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 32-34, 36 and 37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Anscher (US 6,000,109 A).

A safety buckle (30,210 or 120,210) that can be clasped in a plurality of orientations (any of the two orientations) comprising: a first buckle member (30 or 120) and a second buckle member (210) being complementary shaped to fit together with each other in a clasped condition (Figs. 14-19E). A cavity (inner surface of 30 or 120) in one of the first or second buckle members. A projection (211 or 235) on another of the first or second buckle members. The projection is inserted into the cavity of the one of the first or second buckle members in the clasped condition (Figs. 14-19E or when the projection is inserted in a different orientation). A first engagement structure (208,237) on the projection and a second engagement structure (39 or 127) in the cavity. The first and second engagement structures being internal to the buckle in the clasped condition with one of the first or second engagement structures of each of the first and second buckle members and sized and positioned to cooperate with each other to retain the

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first and second buckle members together in the clasped condition in a first orientation (Figs. 14-19E). Another engagement structure (37 or 129,130) located on one of the first or second buckle members the projection or in the cavity and sized and positioned to cooperate with one of the first or second engagement structures to retain the first and second buckle members together in the clasped condition in a second orientation different from the first (if the buckle is inserted in an orientation different from the one disclosed in Figs. 14-19E)A. Another of the first or second engagement structures (37 or 129,130) being free from engagement in the second orientation. A disengagement device (31,35,45) integral with the first or the second buckle member and operable to displace the first or second engagement structure the projection to disengage cooperative engagement structures when actuated (Figs. 14-19E).

A safety buckle (30,210 or 120,210) that can be clasped in a plurality of orientations (any of the two orientations) comprising: a first buckle member (30 or 120) and a second buckle member (210) being complementary shaped to fit together with each other in a clasped condition (Figs. 14-19E). A cavity (inner surface of 30 or 120) in one of the first or second buckle members. A projection (211 or 235) on another of the first or second buckle members. The projection is inserted into the cavity of the one of the first or second buckle members in the clasped condition (Figs. 14-19E or when the projection is inserted in a different orientation). A first engagement structure (212) on the projection and a second engagement structure (37 or 129,130) in the cavity. The first and second engagement structures being internal to the buckle in the clasped condition with one of the first or second engagement structures of each of the first and

second buckle members and sized and positioned to cooperate with each other to retain the first and second buckle members together in the clasped condition in a first orientation (Figs. 14-19E). Another engagement structure (208,237) located on one of the first or second buckle members the projection or in the cavity and sized and positioned to cooperate with one of the first or second engagement structures to retain the first and second buckle members together in the clasped condition in a second orientation different from the first (if the buckle is inserted in an orientation different from the one disclosed in Figs. 14-19E). Another of the first or second engagement structures (212) being free from engagement in the second orientation. A disengagement device (31,35,45) integral with the first or the second buckle member and operable to displace the first or second engagement structure the projection to disengage cooperative engagement structures when actuated (Figs. 14-19E).

The projection further comprises a central arm (211,235) on one of the first or second buckle members. The one of the first or second engagement structures being located on the central arm (Figs. 14-19E).

The another engagement structure is located on an opposite side of the central arm from the one of the first or second engagement structure (second scenario).

The one of the first or second engagement structures or the another engagement structure on the central arm is formed as a recess with (212) a shoulder near an end of the central arm (Figs. 14-19E).

The one of the first or second engagement structures (39,127) is located on the disengagement device.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

3. Claims 1, 3 and 24-31 are allowed.

Claim 35 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

***Response to Arguments***

4. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 32-34, 36 and 37 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

***Conclusion***

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within

TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ruth C Rodriguez whose telephone number is (571) 272-7070. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 07:15 - 15:45.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Victor D. Batson can be reached on (571) 272-6987.

Submissions of your responses by facsimile transmission are encouraged. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (571) 272-6640.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should

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you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/RCR/  
Ruth C. Rodriguez  
Patent Examiner  
Art Unit 3677

rcr  
August 22, 2008

/Robert J. Sandy/  
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3677